Burma Road. Before the end of 1944 American air forces in "free" China were mounting, bases for them were built and in operation, and not only were Japanese ships, troops, and installations in China proper being bombed, but Japanese war plants in Manchuria and the Japanese islands were also being hit. Chinese planes, provided by the United States, were in action against the Japanese. British, Chinese, and American forces based on India forced the Japanese out of the north of Burma. Early in 1945 they were so far successful that road communications between China and Assam were opened through a new highway, the Ledo Road, built over difficult terrain and connecting in Yunnan with the Chinese roads. A pipe line, for the conveying of petroleum and petroleum products, was also under construction from Assam to China. Moreover, in the Pacific the Americans were pushing back the Japanese. In May and June, 1942, the American navy inflicted severe defeats upon the Japanese fleet in the Battle of the Coral Sea and the Battle of Midway. That summer American forces won a foothold on Guadalcanal, in the Solomon Islands. By the end of 1944 they had acquired springboards in the Gilbert, Marshall, and Mariana groups, they had recaptured Guam, and they had effected landings in the Philippines and in the process had dealt severe blows to the Japanese navy. In February, 1945, they retook Manila. Before the end of 1944 the Japanese were expelled from the Aleutians. By the middle of 1945 American island-based and carrier-based planes had bombed important centers in Japan, the Kuriles, the Bonin and Volcano groups, and Formosa. Important footholds had been acquired

on Iwo Jima in the Volcano Islands) and on Okinawa (one of the Liu Ch'iu Islands). Moreover, American and British submarines took heavy toll on Japanese shipping, thus making more difficult the utilization by Japan of its overseas empire and the maintenance of its armies of occupation.

Yet, as the Allied and especially the American tide advanced against them, the Japanese strove persistently and with considerable success to push farther into "free" China. In 1944 and the fore part of 1945 they took most of such of the railways as had remained in Chinese hands. In doing so they all but established through rail communication between Manchuria and Canton, largely cutting off from Chungking the parts of China east of